

precipitate removal of quantitative restrictions could undermine economic stability and the reform process.

After hearing the statements made by India and other Members of the WTO and the International Monetary Fund, the WTC Committee invited India to present a plan to eliminate the quantitative restrictions on imports maintained by India for balance of payments purposes and agreed to resume the consultations in the week beginning 2 June, 1997.

The consultations by the WTO Committee, are now scheduled to be resumed on 10-11 June, 1997.

[Translation]

Agreement with Phillipines

6547. SHRI SATYA DEO SINGH : Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether India and Phillipines has signed an agreement to extend economic cooperation in the field of small scale industries and pharmaceuticals;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the time by which this agreement is likely to come into force ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI BOLLA BULLI RAMAIAH) : (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. India and Philippines have signed two Memoranda of Understanding for economic cooperation in the field of small scale industries and pharmaceuticals. The scope of Memorandum in small scale industries includes experience sharing for evolving policy frame-work for evolving policy frame-work for organised growth of SSI, information exchange, cooperation in areas of Human Resource Development, identification of projects, imparting training, exchange of specialists etc. The scope of memorandum in the area of pharmaceuticals includes manpower development/training, collaborative projects on medicinal plants and research and information exchange on new developments on drugs/other pharmaceuticals.

(c) Both the Momoranda of Understanding came into effect from the date of signing viz; 3rd March, 1997.

Sick Textile Mills in Gujarat

6548. SHRI N.J. RATHWA : Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state :

(a) whether many textiles mills in Gujarat particularly in tribal areas have been sick for more than five years;

(b) if so, the mill-wise details of the performance of

these sick mills, the steps taken to make them viable, to upgrade them by modernisation during the last three years and the funds allocated for the above purpose;

(c) the details of proposed/finalised action plan to make these sick units viable; and

(d) the number of such units which are likely to be closed and the action plan regarding rehabilitation of the workers ?

THE MINISTER OF TEXTILES (SHRI R.L. JALAPPA) :

(a) As on 31.1.97, there were 63 textile mills registered with Board for Industrial and Financial Reconstruction (BIFR) as sick in Gujarat.

(b) and (c) Government has set up BIFR to enquire into the working of sick industrial companies and to prepare and sanction, as appropriate, schemes for revival of mills.

(d) BIFR has issued winding up notice in respect of 25 cases in case of Gujarat as on 28.2.97. Government has established Textile Workers' Rehabilitation Fund for workers rendered jobless due to closure of mills partially or permanently.

Chamber of Lawyers of Allahabad High Court

6549. DR. BALIRAM : Will the Minister of LAW AND JUSTICE be pleased to state :

(a) whether for the efficient and effective dispersal of work, chambers are not available for all the lawyers registered with Allahabad High Court in Uttar Pradesh; and

(b) if so, the steps being taken or proposed to be taken by the Government in this regard ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF LAW AND JUSTICE (SHRI RAMAKANT D. KHALAP) : (a) and (b) The information is being collected from the Government of Uttar Pradesh and the Registry of Allahabad High Court and will be laid on the Table of the House.

[English]

Handicrafts Fairs

6550. SHRI SRIBALLAV PANIGRAHI : Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state :

(a) the number of handicrafts fairs organised by the Government in the State of Orissa and Other States; and

(b) the criteria being followed for selection of craftsmen to participate in such fairs ?

THE MINISTER OF TEXTILES (SHRI R.L. JALAPPA) :

(a) During 1996-97, two handicrafts fairs were organised by the Government in the State of Orissa and fifty nine other fairs were organised in other States.

(b) Artisans are selected for participation in fairs on the basis of their merit and crafts practised by them. National Award winners, Merit Certificate holders, State Award winners and craftspersons producing crafts which are languishing are generally given preference for participation in the fairs.

Provident Fund to Textile Workers

6551. SARDAR SURJIT SINGH BARNALA : Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state :

(a) whether the management of New Egerton Woollen Mills branch Dhariwal has not paid the employee's share of provident fund since July 1993 to its workers;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(c) the amount of provident fund due to the employees till 31st January, 1997 and by what time the payment is likely to be made ?

THE MINISTER OF TEXTILES (SHRI R.L. JALAPPA) :

(a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) As on 31.1.1997 an amount of Rs. 11.16 lakhs was due to the employees which has since been paid.

France Assistance for Markets of Agricultural Products in E.N.

6552. SHRIMATI VASUNDHARA RAJE : Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether France has offered its help to India to enter European markets for marketing agricultural products;

(b) if so, whether any agreement has been signed or proposed to be signed in this regard;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) the action taken to implement those agreements ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI BOLLA BULLI RAMAIAH) : (a) No, Sir.

(b) to (d) Do not arise.

Royalty on Coal

6553. SHRI P.S. GADHAVI :

SHRI SANDIPAN THORAT :

SHRI HANSRAJ AHIR :

Will the Minister of COAL be pleased to state :

(a) whether his Ministry prepared any questionnaire on the revision of royalty rates on coal and circulated to all the State Governments for their comments;

(b) if so, whether the comments of the State received have been examined by the Government;

(c) if so, the action taken for the revision of royalty on coal;

(d) whether Lignite which is equivalent to 'E' grade coal was not included in the questionnaire for revision of royalty;

(e) if so, the reasons thereof; and

(f) the number of times the royalty rates revised during the last three years and the amount of royalty given to each state during the last three years ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COAL (SHRIMATI KANTI SINGH) : (a) The questionnaire was prepared and circulated to the State Governments in February, 1997 by the Study Group constituted by the Ministry of Coal on 28.1.1997 to consider the question of revision of the rates of royalty on coal.

(b) and (c) On consideration of the comments of the State Governments and other aspects, the Study Group is required to submit its report along with the recommendations by 28th July, 1997 to the Government for taking a decision on revision in rates of royalty on coal.

(d) and (e) A separate Study Group to go into the question of revision of royalty rate on lignite was constituted on 15.3.95. Therefore, lignite was not included in the questionnaire circulated to the State Governments by the Study Group on the revision of royalty rates on coal set up on 28.1.1997.

(f) Royalty rates on coal were revised last on 11.10.94. However, in respect of Meghalaya only the royalty rates on coal were further revised on 13.1.95. The details of royalty paid by the Coal India Limited to the coal producing States during the last three years are given below :-